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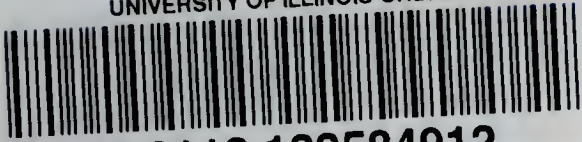
April 1, 1985-March 31, 1986

## ILLINOIS FISHING INFORMATION

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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA



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**Illinois  
Department of  
Conservation**  
life and land together

# CATCH & SIZE LIMITS\*

## FISH

Black Bass (largemouth, smallmouth, spotted)	6 daily (singly or collectively, except in Mississippi River between Illinois and Iowa where daily limit is 10)
Muskie/ Tiger Muskie	1 (singly or collectively, minimum length 30 inches)
Northern Pike	3 daily (except in Mississippi River between Illinois and Iowa where daily limit is 5 and in Mississippi River between Illinois and Missouri where daily limit is 1; 24-inch minimum length, except in Mississippi River where there is no size limit)
Salmon and Trout (in Lake Michigan)	5 (singly or collectively, not more than 3 of which may be Lake Trout; minimum length of 10 inches)
Salmon and Trout (outside Lake Michigan)	5 (singly or collectively)
Striped Bass (Ocean Rockfish) White Bass and their Hybrids	No bag limit for fish less than 17 inches except in certain waters. Bag limit is three in all waters for fish 17 inches long or longer
Walleye and Sauger	6 daily (singly or collectively, except in Mississippi River between Illinois and Iowa where daily limit is 10 and in Mississippi River between Illinois and Missouri where daily limit is 8)

## FROGS

Bullfrog (season June 15- August 31, both dates inclusive)	8 (daily) 16 (possession)
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\*These are state-wide regulations; specific areas may have regulations which differ. Please check regulations which are posted at each lake where applicable.

## MEASURE YOUR CATCH



Use a flat board; close the mouth, and compress the tail.

## SPORT FISHING LICENSE

A resident sport fishing license may be obtained by anyone who has been a resident of Illinois 30 days prior to purchase. Anglers under 16 years of age, 65 or over, and persons declared legally handicapped or blind, may fish without a license. Owners or tenants (if they reside on the land) may fish in waters on or flowing over their lands without a license. This exemption does not apply to club and organizational lakes or lake developments.

Persons on active duty in the Armed Forces are considered residents. A person on active duty in the Armed Forces, who entered the service from Illinois and is an Illinois resident, may fish without a license while on leave.

Anglers should have their license in possession at all times while fishing. Licenses expire on March 31 each year. Current fees are (includes agent's fee):

Resident sport fishing; annual . . . . .	\$7.50
Resident sport fishing; 65 years old and over . . . . .	None needed
Resident sport fishing; Under 16 years of age . . . . .	None needed
Resident sport fishing; Disabled, blind . . . . .	None needed
Resident and non-resident sport fishing; 1 day, Lake Michigan . . . . .	\$2.50
Non-resident sport fishing; 10 days . . . .	\$7.50
Non-resident sport fishing; annual . Reciprocal (minimum is \$12.00)	
Sportsman's License . . . . .	\$13.75
(combined hunting & fishing licenses)	

## DIGEST OF FISHING REGULATIONS

### ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

The fisheries of Illinois are administered to assure conservation and enhancement of the fishery resource and the equity of the fishing public, while providing for maximum enjoyment of the sport. Statutes provide the framework by which fishing opportunities are administered. These opportunities, however, are sometimes subject to a variety of regulations, depending on local site conditions and situations peculiar to a particular fishery. These detailed regulations are set forth in administrative rules. Such rules are enforced in the same manner as are provisions of the statutes, and are subject to the same penalties.

### BAIT FISHING

A sport fishing license permits the use of legal sized cast nets, shad scoops and minnow seines to obtain shad, alewife, minnows and crayfish to use as bait, provided that they are



not sold. All cast nets shall be not larger than 8 feet in diameter or of a mesh size not larger than 3/8 inch bar measurement. All shad scoops shall be not larger than 30 inches in diameter or of a mesh size not larger than 1/2 inch bar measurement or longer than 4 feet in length. Minnow seines shall not be longer than 20 feet, deeper than 6 feet or contain mesh size larger than 1/2 inch bar measurement.

## **COMMERCIAL FISH**

Size limits on fish taken commercially, or by commercial fishermen for market, are: channel catfish, flathead catfish, blue catfish, and white catfish, 15 inches. There is no size limit on carp, drum, bullhead, buffalo, shovelnose sturgeon, paddlefish, sucker, gar (except alligator gar), bowfin, eel, yellow perch, chub, mooneye, goldeye, carpsuckers, and smelt. Trout, salmon and whitefish may not be taken commercially, but if caught incidentally must be returned to waters where taken.

## **COMMERCIAL FISHING LICENSE**

A commercial fishing license is required of any person who uses a commercial device to take fish, minnows, frogs, or mussels. A resident commercial fishing license can be issued only to persons who have resided in Illinois for at least a year. The commercial fishing license expires March 31 annually. In addition, the holder of this license must obtain a license for each commercial device fished.

Mussels, except Federal endangered species, may be taken by hand to use as bait; the daily and possession limit is 25.

## **CRAYFISH**

Crayfish may be taken for bait, using seine with mesh no larger than 1/2 inch. The seine should be no longer than 20 feet or deeper than 6 feet.

The Department of Conservation discourages the use of rusty crayfish. This species destroys aquatic vegetation and eats the eggs of various fishes, which negatively affects their reproduction.

## **DAILY FEE FISHING AREA**

All residents and non-residents, unless exempt, must have a sport fishing license to fish in a daily fee fishing area.

## **DIP NET**

A sport fishing license allows the holder to take smelt in Lake Michigan with a dip net not exceeding 12 feet in diameter and having a mesh size not less than 1 inch diagonal stretch. In other waters carp, carpsuckers, buffalo and gizzard shad may be taken with a dip net up to 15 feet in diameter and with a mesh no less than 1 1/2 inches bar measure. Such equipment may not be used within 100 feet of a dam or to take game fish.

## **ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES**

There are 13 species of fish in Illinois currently on the endangered and threatened species list and may not be taken. They are: bigeye chub, bluebreast darter, bluehead shiner, harlequin darter, longjaw cisco, cisco, longnose sucker, alligator gar, pugnose shiner, blacknose shiner, bantam sunfish, lake whitefish, and lake sturgeon.

The state threatened river otter is occasionally taken in nets of commercial fishermen. Reporting of accidental captures should be made to Department of Conservation Police Officer or the Endangered species coordinator (217/785-8774).

## **FISH PRESERVES**

All waters under state jurisdiction are statutorily fish preserves, open only to sport fishing. However, certain waters are open to commercial fishing by administrative rule. These include: Lake Michigan (limited entry), Mississippi River (except Quincy Bay), Illinois River (except from the Illinois Route 89 Bridge upstream), Wabash River, Little Wabash River, Skillet Fork, and portions of the Embarras River, Sangamon River, Kaskaskia River, Big Muddy River, and Cache River.

## **FROGS**

A sport fishing license is required to take bullfrogs. Firearms, airguns, gas guns or commercial fishing devices such as hoop nets, traps or seines are not allowed in the taking of bullfrogs.

## **ICE FISHING**

A sport fishing license is required for ice fishing; the ice angler may use not more than two poles or tipups with no more than two hooks on each line. Holes cut in the ice are limited to 12-inch diameter or less. Shelter structures are limited to portable construction of metal or wood framework, covered with canvas, paper, plastic material or similar fabric. Each shelter shall have name and address of the owner attached, and after March 1 the shelter must be removed when not in use, and not left unattended at any time. All poles and tipups shall be constantly attended, and kept under observation by the angler.

## **ILLEGAL DEVICES**

Use of the following devices in the taking of fish is prohibited: electricity or electrical devices, lime, acid, medical, chemical or mechanical compound, dope, drugs, fishberry, dynamite, nitroglycerine or other explosive, snare, treated grain, firearms, air gun, gas gun, wire basket, wire seine, wire net, wire trotline or limb lines of any kind. Carp, buffalo, suckers, gar and bowfin may be taken by pitchfork, underwater spear gun, bow and arrow or

other archery device, spear or gig, but no other fish may be taken by these means.

## **MINNOWS**

A minnow is statutorily defined as any fish in the family Cyprinidae except carp and goldfish.

## **POLLUTION**

The Department of Conservation cooperates with the Environmental Protection Agency in making reports on pollution and in making pollution investigations. Anglers are very often the first to observe instances of water pollution, and their cooperation and assistance is invited in reporting these instances to district and regional fish biologists, to a conservation police officer or to the Division of Fish and Wildlife Resources in Springfield. It is unlawful for waste or sewage to be discharged into waters so as to kill aquatic life; it is also unlawful to abandon or deposit wire, cans, bottles, glass, paper, trash, rubbish, cardboard, wood cartons, boxes, trees, brush or other insoluble materials into the water or on the ice, or at any place on the bank where such debris is liable to be washed into the water. Strict penalties are provided for violation of this section of the statute.

## **PROPERTY**

Consideration for others is a philosophy of the sportsman. Consent of the landowner or occupant of the premises should be obtained before fishing, or attempting to take minnows, turtles, crayfish or frogs on another's property or within waters flowing over another's property. Care should be taken not to cause damage to the property.

## **SALE OF FISH**

No fish or parts of a fish (including eggs) taken by sport fishing methods (including snagging) may be bought, sold or bartered.

## **SALMON STAMP**

Anglers are required to purchase a "Salmon Stamp" prior to taking of salmon and trout. Fees are (includes agent's fees):

Resident and non-resident, annual . . . . .	\$2.50
Resident; 65 years old and over . .	None needed
Resident; under 16 years of age . .	None needed
Resident; disabled, blind . . . . .	None needed

## **SEASONS**

The Illinois sport fishing season is open year round.

## **SMELT**

A sport fishing license entitles the angler to take smelt. Waters of Lake Michigan comprise Illinois' smelt fishery. Smelt may be taken with a seine or gill net not more than 12 feet long, 6 feet deep and with mesh size not more than 1 1/2 inches diagonal stretch, or by dip net not



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more than 12 feet in diameter with mesh size not less than 1 inch diagonal stretch. Trolley, or power lines, are also used by the sport fisherman in taking smelt (see Trot and Trolley line section). No person shall operate more than one smelt net device at any one time.

## **SNAGGING**

Licensed anglers may snag for certain fish year-round within 300 yards downstream below all locks and dams on the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers and within a 100-yard limit upstream or downstream of the dam at Horseshoe Lake in Alexander County. In these areas the following species may be taken: carp, buffalo, freshwater drum, paddlefish (2 per day), bowfin, gizzard shad, carpsuckers, longnose and shortnose gar, and suckers (except longnose sucker).

Snagging for chinook and coho salmon only (5 per day, singly or collectively) is permitted from the Lake Michigan shoreline in the Lincoln Park Lagoon from the Fullerton Avenue Bridge to the southern end of the lagoon; Waukegan Harbor; discharge canal and bay area formed by the landfill at Northwestern University, Evanston (not in lagoon); Jackson Harbor (inner & outer harbors); Winnetka Power Plant discharge area and the Waukegan Power Plant discharge area. Dates for this snagging will be announced publically by the Department of Conservation. No snagging is allowed at any time within 200 feet of a moored watercraft or as otherwise posted. It is illegal to buy, sell, or barter any salmon or parts thereof (including eggs) taken by snagging.

No sorting of snagged salmon and paddlefish is permitted. Every salmon 10 inches in total length or longer and paddlefish taken by snagging must be kept and included in the daily catch limit.

Anglers are permitted only one pole and line device to which can be attached no more than two hooks.

## **SPEARING**

Carp, buffalo, suckers, gar (except alligator gar), and bowfin may be taken with spear or gig, pitchfork, underwater spear gun, bow and arrow or archery device. Frogs may be taken with spear or gig, though use of firearms, airguns or gas guns are prohibited as are commercial fishing devices such as hoop nets, traps or seines.

## **SPORT FISH**

Principal sport fish are the muskellunge, tiger muskie, northern pike, walleye, sauger, largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, spotted bass, warmouth, striped bass, hybrid striped bass, white bass, yellow bass, sunfish, bluegill, crappie, trout and salmon. These may

be taken only with sport fishing devices by anglers having sport fishing licenses. Other species such as catfish, freshwater drum and carp are considered both sport and commercial fish, and the means of taking and purpose for which they are taken prescribes the type of license required. Still other species are considered commercial fish, though when taken on sport fishing devices an angler must have a sport license. A fourth category is endangered and threatened species (See Endangered and Threatened Species).

## **SPORT FISH CONTAMINANT ADVISORIES**

The Illinois Department of Public Health advises that persons who eat salmon or trout taken from Lake Michigan limit their consumption of these fish. The advisory was issued following a review of the levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB's) and other chemicals in Lake Michigan salmon and trout. The advisory applies to coho and chinook salmon and to lake, brown and rainbow trout that weigh five pounds or more.

Consumption of fish weighing five pounds or more should be limited to one-half pound per week. Women who anticipate pregnancy, or who are pregnant or lactating; and young children, particularly those of pre-school age, should not eat any of these fish regardless of the size of the fish.

The advisory does not apply to fish that weigh less than five pounds as the higher levels of PCB's and chlordane are found in the older, larger fish. Lake Michigan salmon and trout that weigh more than five pounds are expected to contain PCB levels of more than two parts per million and chlordane levels higher than 0.3 parts per million. These levels are the maximum acceptable tolerances as established by the U. S. Food and Drug Administration. Illinois has adopted the federal recommendations.

The recommended consumption of no more than one-half pound per week was established for fish that are prepared in ways that will reduce the intake of chemical contaminants. Prepare the fish by removing all excess fat, especially the belly and dorsal flaps, before cooking. Fish should be boiled or baked on an elevated rack so that any additional fat will drip off. The fat contains the highest concentration of pesticides, so the fat that drips off during cooking should be discarded and not used in anything edible. Fish may also be boiled or poached, but all broth should be discarded.

Even though the long-term effects of exposure to PCB's and chlordane have not yet been determined in detail, it is advisable to limit consumption of the chemicals.



The Illinois Department of Public Health has advisories in effect for other lakes in Illinois. Public Health recommends that the general public limit their consumption level to not more than one half pound per week for channel catfish from Clinton Lake; catfish, carp, buffalo, drum, and white bass from Lake Springfield; catfish, and buffalo from Lake Decatur; carp, channel catfish, and buffalo from Lake Taylorville; and channel catfish from Paris Lakes.

For more specific information on these advisories you should contact the Illinois Department of Public Health or the Department of Conservation.

## **SPORT FISHING LICENSE**

A sport fishing license entitles an angler to take fish, crayfish, turtles or bullfrogs within limits denoted in the Catch and Size Limits Table, except for endangered and threatened species. It is unlawful to sell any aquatic life, or parts thereof, taken by a sport fishing license. Devices permitted by the sport fishing license include: bank pole and line, dip net, throw line, trot line, buoyed device (jug fishing), or other legal devices not exceeding 50 hooks in total. Also permitted are legal sized cast nets, shad scoops and minnow seines for bait fishing. Smelt may be taken in Lake Michigan with legal sized dip nets. Two untagged sport fishing devices are allowed; each device more than two must be tagged with the angler's name and address. Any device left unattended must be tagged with the angler's name and address. If attached to a tree, the device must be attached only to the main trunk below the water line. (See also sections on Ice Fishing and Trolling.)

Special fishing regulations at certain lakes prohibit the use of some devices or numbers of devices; please check the special regulations which are posted at each lake where applicable.

## **STOCKING**

Fish may be released into the waters from which they were taken, but permission from the Department of Conservation must be secured before releasing fish in other waters.

An importation permit from the Department of Conservation is required for the shipment into Illinois of any species or hybrid of salmon or trout, their eggs or viable sperm.

## **TROLLING**

Trolling is permissible, provided the angler has not more than three poles and lines with not more than two hooks or lures on each.

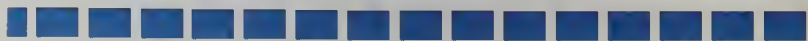
## **TROT AND TROLLEY LINES**

Hooks on trot lines, throw lines and similar devices shall be spaced not less than 24 in-

ches apart, except on trolley or power lines used in Lake Michigan.

## TURTLES

Turtles may not be taken by commercial fishing devices, including hoop nets, traps or seines, or by using firearms, air guns or gas guns. Turtles may be taken only by hand or by hook and line. Locating turtles by rodding, and then taking by hand is permissible.



# CONSERVATION ADDRESSES

## SPRINGFIELD OFFICE

Department of Conservation  
Division of Fish and  
Wildlife Resources  
Lincoln Tower Plaza  
524 S. 2nd St.  
Springfield, Illinois 62706  
217/782-6424

Department of Conservation  
Region II Office  
110 James Road  
Spring Grove, Illinois 60081  
815/675-2385

Department of Conservation  
Region III Office  
8 Henson Place  
Champaign, Illinois 61820  
217/333-5773

## CHICAGO OFFICE

Department of Conservation  
State of Illinois Building  
160 North LaSalle Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60601  
312/793-2070

Department of Conservation  
Region IV Office  
34 West Broadway  
Alton, Illinois 62002  
618/462-1181

## REGIONAL OFFICES

Department of Conservation  
Region I Office  
2612 Locust  
Sterling, Illinois 61081  
815/625-2968

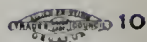
Department of Conservation  
Region V Office  
R.R. 4, Box 68  
Benton, Illinois 62812  
618/435-8138

NOTICE: This publication is intended as a guide only. For official law see Illinois revised statutes and Department Administrative Rules.

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## Division of Fish and Wildlife Resources

700M-1-85 P.O. #44559



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